

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/783,199

Applicant(s)

SCHLUCHTER ET AL

Examiner

Art Unit

Michael A. Lyons

2877

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to amendment filed 24 April 2006.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-21.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-21 are allowed in view of the prior art.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As for claim 1, the prior art of record, taken either alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious a system for acquiring position information relevant to a specific axis comprising a movable apparatus that has first and second faces at a same side associated with a parallel to the specific axis, the faces being at an angle to one another that is non-parallel to the axis, and an interferometer that directs a first and second beam to the first and second faces, respectively, the interferometer also combining the beams, and beam-steering members that allow the first and second beam paths to vary in unity with the displacement of the movable apparatus along the specific axis, in combination with the rest of the limitations of the above claim.

As to claim 10, the prior art of record, taken either alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious a method of utilizing an interferometric system to acquire position information of a movable apparatus along a specific axis, the method comprising manipulating first and second beams directed to the movable apparatus via reflections so that each beam path of the first beam is symmetrical to a corresponding beam path of the second beam when the movable apparatus is in a beam symmetry position along the specific axis, followed by combining the first and second beams to interferometrically acquire position information, in combination with the rest of the limitations of the above claim.

As to claim 16, the prior art of record, taken either alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious a system for acquiring position information relevant to a specific axis, the system comprising a wafer stage having first and second surfaces on a side, the stage movable in the X-Y-Z plane, a plurality of optical members that define first and second beam paths for a first and second beam, the members located beyond projections of the extreme perimeter of motion of the stage in the Z direction, with the first and second beams being combined to acquire interferometry-based determinations regarding movements of the stage in the Z direction, in combination with the rest of the limitations of the above claim.

For further reasoning for each claim, see the applicants' arguments dated April 24, 2006 in response to the previous Office Action of record.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael A. Lyons whose telephone number is 571-272-2420. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

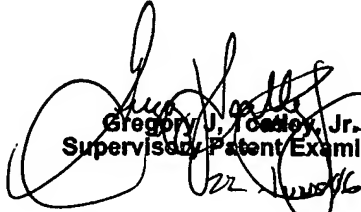
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory J. Toatley can be reached on 571-272-2800 ext. 77. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

MAL

June 16, 2006


Gregory J. Costello, Jr.
Supervisory Patent Examiner
22 June 06